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Title: Need to provide technical and advisory support to Women Self Help Groups procuring paddy in Andhra Pradesh.

SHRIMATI BOTCHA JHANSI LAKSHMI (VIZIANAGARAM): In the State of Andhra Pradesh some Women Self Help Groups are procuring paddy directly from the farmers at par with FCI and the Department of Civil Supplies. In order to strengthen their procurement system, the Centre should provide Technical and Advisory support. The Centre has decided to procure about 40 lakh tones of paddy in Andhra Pradesh, one third of its target is being procured by Women Self Help Groups alone directly from the farmers. The Women Self Help Groups have decided to procure paddy through 1034 centres across the State of Andhra Pradesh during this Kharif season. The FCI and State Civil Supply Departments have enormous logistic and machinery support, storage capacity and other resources, but without having any kind of support, the Women Self Help Groups have procured about 7.2 lakh metric tones of paddy during 2010-11 kharif season.

Though the Women Self Groups are showing utmost enthusiasm in procurement, helping the farmers but are not getting technical and advisory support from Government for storing the procured paddy. Hence, I urge upon the Government to provide moisture measuring instruments, gunny bags, grain cleaning machines, tarpaulin covers and other needful items to these groups for procuring paddy. Due to non-availability of these items, especially, moisture measuring instruments, rice millers are not accepting the procured paddy from these groups. If the paddy's moisture is above 17% or more, these groups do incur heavy losses while weighing after drying process of paddy for removing moisture. The Women Self Help Groups are also incurring in crores of rupees when the procured paddy stored openly and its moisture level is increasing due to fog in winter season.

I, therefore, urge upon the Government through this august house to provide necessary technical and advisory support in the interest of national development and a great viability for women's economic empowerment by grain procurement system by Women Self Help Groups in Andhra Pradesh.